- Insurance of crops against production loss due to natural calamities;
- Assistance to the farmers under various agricultural production programmes.

Making agriculture remunerative

†86. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that agriculture has turned into a non-profitable industry and agriculturists are committing suicides as they are not able to repay the loans;

(b) if not, the assessment of Government in this regard; and

(c) the rapid and long term measures decided by Government for making agriculture a profitable industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Index of Terms of Trade (ITT), reflecting the inter sectoral terms of trade between agriculture and non-agriculture sectors, which had declined from 105.6 in 1997-98 to 102.8 in 2000-01 recovered to 104.5 during 2001-02. For the year 2002-03, ITT is estimated at 106.8, reflecting further improvement in the terms of trade in favour of agriculture.

Farmers in certain parts of the country have committed suicide for reasons which can broadly be attributed to crop failure, indebtedness because of high rate of interest on loans, drought social and economic insecurity, family disputes, marital disharmony etc.

(c) To mitigate the problems of the farmers the Government have identified the following areas for focused and priority attention:

- Doubling Rural Credit in three years, easing the burden of debt and high interest rates;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- Dry Land Farming promotion of Horticulture production and Water Management;
- Creation of Additional Irrigation facilities;
- Market support to farmers produce for ensuring fair and remunerative prices;
- Insurance of crops against production loss due to natural calamities;
- Assistance to the farmers under various agricultural and horticultural production programmes.

Emphasis on cash crops

†87. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the farmers have given emphasis on cash crops instead of conventional grains on a large scale in several areas of the country in the last few years;

(b) if so, whether Government have conducted any survey to ascertain the area of land brought under cash crops during the last ten years; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Area under conventional foodgrain crops during last five years except 2002-03 remained in the range of 121 to 123 million hectares. During 2002-03 the area under foodgrains declined sharply to 111 million hectares due to severe drought that affect several States/ Regions in the country.

(b) and (c) The area under cash crops including the oilseeds, fibers, tobacco and minor crops like indigo, etc. is collected on a regular basis, as per land use statistics. A statement indicating State-wise data on area under cash crops for the latest year, for which information is available, *i.e.* 1999-2000, is enclosed.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.